



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

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NEWS AND EVENTS

- **Access the American Lung Association's Back to School with Asthma Toolkit and State of the Air® App.** Find out how you can support an asthma-friendly school environment with the [Back to School with Asthma Toolkit](#). The toolkit includes fact sheets, reference guides and training materials, and will help you educate your students about asthma. Both indoor environmental hazards in schools and poor outdoor air quality can trigger asthma attacks. Download the [State of the Air® app](#) for your iPhone or Android to obtain information on how to further protect student, teacher and staff health.
- **Attend the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International Annual Meeting & Expo.** The ASBO International Annual Meeting & Expo gives school business administrators the opportunity to exchange ideas, build relationships, strengthen their skills and advance their careers. The conference will be held **October 12–15, 2012**, in Phoenix, Ariz. [Register today!](#)
- **Attend the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting & Expo.** The APHA Annual Meeting & Expo is the oldest and largest gathering of public health professionals in the world, attracting more than 13,000 national and international physicians, administrators, nurses, educators, researchers, epidemiologists and related health specialists. APHA's meeting program will cover current and emerging health science, policy, and practice issues in an effort to prevent disease and promote health. Representatives from EPA will attend this conference to promote the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance — come by the EPA booth and say hi. The conference will be held **October 27–31, 2012**, in San Francisco, Calif. [Register today!](#)

Did You Know ...

You can take part in the [Green Apple Day of Service](#).

On **Sept. 29, 2012**, the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) will host the first ever International Green Apple Day of Service. On this day, advocates from across the country and around the world will come together in support of healthy, sustainable schools by taking real action in their communities.

Visit mygreenapple.org to pledge your support, share your commitment, and connect with USGBC about news and upcoming resources.

Access Previous Connector E-Newsletters Online

Can't find a previous *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter in your email inbox? No problem! Visit the [e-newsletter archive](#) on the *IAQ Tools for Schools* website to access printable versions (PDFs) of all past editions.

MYTH-BUSTERS: GET THE FACTS ON SCHOOL BUS IDLING



Emissions from gas or diesel-powered engines are a source of pollution for school grounds and buildings. Unnecessary school bus idling affects human health, pollutes the air, wastes fuel and causes excess engine

wear. It is also a source of pollution that can contribute to [IAQ issues](#) at schools. In sufficient concentrations and duration, these pollutants may increase the chance of serious health effects in students, such as [asthma](#).

To learn more, check out **five myths below** and test your knowledge of [school bus idling](#).

Myth #1:

It is important to warm up engines with a long idle period, especially in cold weather.

Fact:

For today's school bus engines, bus and engine manufacturers routinely suggest a warm up time of less than five minutes.

Myth #2:

It is better for an engine to run at low speed (idling) than to run at regular speed.

Fact:

Running an engine at low speed causes twice the wear on internal parts as driving at regular speeds.

Myth #3:

The engine must be kept running in order to operate the school bus safety equipment (flashing lights, stop sign). It is impossible to run this equipment off the internal circuitry of the bus because the battery will run down.

Fact:

By re-wiring circuitry, safety equipment can be operated without the engine running for up to an hour with no ill-effects on the electrical system of the bus.

Should we have our schools tested for radon? How do we keep mold from returning once it has been removed?

Find answers to these and other questions through the Schools IAQ Connector Email Discussion List. **Join today** by sending a blank email message to schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov. Then check your email inbox for confirmation and membership details.

Myth #4:

Idling is necessary to keep the cabin comfortable.

Fact:

Depending on the weather, many buses will maintain a comfortable interior temperature for some time without idling. Idling is not an efficient way to keep the cabin warm. Bus routes should be timed so children and drivers do not need to spend a lot of extra time on the bus when it is not en route, particularly in hot or cold weather. In addition, auxiliary heaters can be purchased and installed to keep the cabin comfortable.

Myth #5:

It is better to just leave the engine idling because a "cold start" produces more pollution.

Fact:

A [recent EPA study](#) found that the emissions measured after a school bus is restarted contains less carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and other pollutants than if the school bus idled continuously over a 10-minute period. The analysis indicated that continuous idling for more than three minutes emits more fine particles (soot) than a restart.

For more information about school bus idling, including EPA's Clean School Bus program, visit <http://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/antiidling.htm>.

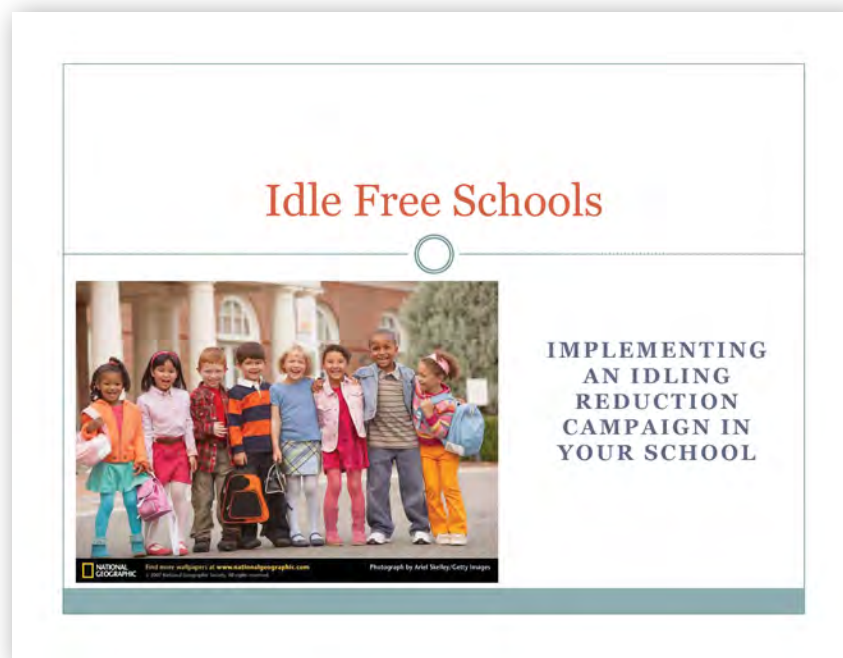
CREATE AN IDLE-FREE CAMPAIGN AT YOUR SCHOOL

“Vehicle idling has a very real impact on children at schools because their lungs are particularly susceptible to air pollution. Fortunately, there are little- to no-cost solutions to reduce this source of pollution. Idling policies and campaigns can decrease negative health impacts as well as save money on fuel for parents who idle while waiting to pick up their children after school and for schools where the buses tend to idle excessively. Reducing parent and school bus idling is truly a no-brainer for any school.”

-Rebecca Russo, Mobile Sources Program Manager, EPA Region 8

To provide you with everything your school needs to institute a simple, yet vital and effective idling reduction campaign, EPA's Region 8 office developed an [Idle Free Schools Toolkit](#). The Toolkit, which can be used when developing or sustaining your school's [IAQ management program](#), includes all of the information needed to reduce student exposure to toxic vehicle exhaust. Schools can use all of the materials and follow the recommended schedule provided, or can use the materials to develop an idling reduction campaign that better suits the school's needs and capabilities.

To share this information with members of your school district use the [Idle Free Schools presentation](#), which explains the steps to developing idling policies and how to involve students and inform drivers, and provides sample letters and policies, much more.



HOW ONE DISTRICT TACKLED IDLING AND INVOLVED STUDENTS

To address vehicle idling on its school grounds, Falcon School District 49 in Colorado participated in the [Engines Off! Colorado](#) program, a collaborative effort between federal, state and local governments to improve regional air quality by reducing vehicle idling.

Hear how the District involved students in its anti-idling efforts and how it made a positive impact on the school community.

"Our goal was to encourage parents to turn off their engines as they waited to pick up their children from school. To get this message to the entire school community and to spread awareness about the importance of limiting vehicle idling, we involved students in this effort. The student government body and students in a science class volunteered to collect emissions data on vehicles that sat idling outside the building. This was a great learning opportunity for the students and helped educate parents who are concerned about the health impacts of vehicle exhaust and asthma management."

-R.J. Berry, Bus Driver, Falcon School District 49, Colorado



GET ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter? Do you have suggestions for a webinar or e-newsletter feature, or do you have questions about a specific IAQ topic? If so, send us an email at IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

Share YOUR news and events! Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Connector e-newsletter. Email your news and events to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

The *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance is a comprehensive resource designed to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>.